

Message Text

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ACTION DPW-01

INFO OCT-01 EA-06 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-05 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 SAJ-01 OMB-01 /052 W

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R 200503Z NOV 74

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1548

INFO SECDEF

CINCPAC

CDR JCRC NKP

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MOPS, PFOR, LA

SUBJECT: LAOS - PW/MIA SITUATION

REFS: A) FBIS/BANGKOK 100955Z NOV 74

B) FBIS/BANGKOK 131521Z NOV 74

1. EMBOFF MET NOVEMBER 15 WITH COLONEL LOUN SISOUNOL, VIENTIANE SIDE REPRESENTATIVE ON THE JOINT CENTRAL COMMISSION TO IMPLEMENT THE AGREEMENTS (JCCIA) AND FAR PROVOST MARSHAL GENERAL, TO REVIEW RECENT ROUND OF PW RELEASES.

2. COLONEL LOUN CONFIRMED RECAPITULATION RECENTLY GIVEN TO THE PRESS BY HIS VIENTIANE SIDE JCCIA COLLEAGUE, COLONEL SOMBOUN VONGPRACHANH, AS FOLLOWS: IN THE SERIES OF FIVE RELEASES FROM MID-SEPTEMBER THROUGH EARLY NOVEMBER, PATHET LAO RELEASED A TOTAL OF 353 PRISONERS; OF THIS NUMBER, 138 WERE LAO, 214 WERE THAI, AND ONE (EMMET KAY) WAS AMERICAN. VIENTIANE SIDE RELEASED 173 NORTH VIETNAMESE AND 7 PATHET LAO, FOR A TOTAL OF 180 PWS. SOMBOUN WENT ON TO TELL NEWSPAPER XAT LAO THAT VIENTIANE SIDE HAS A LIST OF

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4,314 PRISONERS OF WAR CAPTURED BY THE PATHET LAO AND

INDICATED THAT THE VIENTIANE SIDE WILL DEMAND TO KNOW WHETHER OR NOT THE PL WILL RELEASE ANY ADDITIONAL PWS. IF NOT, THEN THE VIENTIANE SIDE WILL UNDERTAKE "RESEARCH EFFORTS" TO FIND THE MISSING.

3. LOUN NOTED THAT THE 138 LAO PWS RELEASED TO THE VIENTIANE SIDE WERE ALL NCOS AND ENLISTED PERSONNEL, WITH EXCEPTION OF 8 LIEUTENANTS. (COMMENT: THIS IS ONE CIRCUMSTANCE CONTRIBUTING TO VIENTIANE SIDE BELIEF THAT PATHET LAO STILL HOLD FAR PERSONNEL.) LOUN ALSO CONFIRMED THAT VIENTIANE SIDE HAD HANDED OVER TO LPF ABOVE-MENTIONED LIST OF 4,314 NAMES DURING JCCIA MEETING ON NOVEMBER 14; LPF REPRESENTATIVES SAID THEIR COMPARABLE LIST HAD NOT YET BEEN RECEIVED FROM SAM NEUA.

4. EMBOFF THEN RAISED WITH COLONEL LOUN TWO RECENT RADIO PATHET LAO BROADCASTS: NOVEMBER 7 COMMUNIQUE WHICH INCLUDES SENTENCE, "I HOPE THAT THE VIENTIANE SIDE WILL RETURN MORE PERSONNEL OF THE PATRIOTIC FORCES SIDE ON THE NEXT OCCASION" (REF A), AND NOVEMBER 13 DIATRIBE WHICH SAYS, "THE VIENTIANE SIDE CONTINUES TO DETAIN AND TORTURE PWS OF THE PATRIOTIC FORCES SIDE..." (REF B). LOUN REAFFIRMED THAT VIENTIANE SIDE HAS RELEASED ALL PWS IT HELD AND DISMISSED ALLEGATION OF TORTURE AS TYPICAL PL PROPAGANDA. HE ADDED THAT VIENTIANE SIDE IS STRONGLY CONCERNED ABOUT ITS MISSING PERSONNEL WHEREAS LPF IS NOT.

5. COMMENT: WHILE EACH LAO PARTY IS ACCUSING THE OTHER OF HOLDING OUT, OUR IMPRESSION IS THAT NEITHER SIDE IS VERY EXERCISED ABOUT THE MATTER AND WILL NOT RAISE IT AS A MAJOR ISSUE.

6. REPORT ON RELEASE BY LPF OF 38 LAO PRISONERS AT PAK OU ON NOVEMBER 7 IS CONTAINED IN DAO VIENTIANE 190939Z NOV 74.
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